

still serving in the House of Representatives. After graduating from Howard, he could have chosen many different paths. He chose public service. From John's first moments on our team, it was clear that he was not only sharp and eager to work, but that he cared deeply about his fellow colleagues and that he was completely dedicated to our mission of serving the people of Maryland and the country.

When I was elected to the Senate, I was thrilled to have John move to this side of the Capitol with me. He leapt at every opportunity to advance our mission—growing from organizing and drafting letters to constituents, to taking constituent meetings, to eventually thinking of and writing legislation. He was a vibrant force on Capitol Hill both in our office and outside of it, and was an active member of the Senate Black Legislative Staff Caucus.

When our Senate office first divided up issues among our legislative correspondents, John chose to take responsibility for some of the hottest button issues, like criminal justice reform and public safety, that demanded an open ear and a welcoming heart. He worked on gun issues and spoke to constituents who had experienced personal tragedies from gun violence, and he always brought their feelings to his work on legislation to strengthen our gun laws. When the previous administration was trying to dismantle parts of the civil service, John met with and helped Federal employees who feared they might lose their jobs at any moment. In a million different ways, John proved that empathy has a home in public service and can even direct the course of policy changes.

When we decided to hold a hearing on the hardships that Postal Service delays were imposing on Americans, John remembered a meeting he had held months earlier with a group from the National Federation of the Blind, where they discussed the real challenges they were experiencing because of the long delays in the delivery of their essential materials. John was moved by their stories at the time, and he lifted their voices. At his suggestion, we invited a member of that group to testify, and their moving and powerful testimony is now leading the changes that will help every American. That was John—listening and then bringing people's voices into the public square to change lives for the better.

John brought empathy to his work and to the office, but he also brought great joy. His desk was a must-stop place for members of our team throughout the day. People would stop by to share his company, to hear his loud and infectious laugh, to talk about the latest news of the day, or—I have been told—to joke about the craziest couple on “90 Day Fiance,” which, on the enthusiastic recommendation of John and a few others, built quite a following in our office among current and past staff. I was not sure what to think about all that when I learned about it.

John brought joy with his wry wit and keen sense of the absurd—always taking his work seriously, but never taking himself too seriously. He had a critical skill on Capitol Hill—the ability to track down House and Senate receptions with the very best food, and then alert his colleagues to the spoils. If someone couldn't get away from the office, he would bring back snacks to share, pulling treats out of his pockets like a magician.

He was a true member of our office family and always a team player, always willing to advance our causes on behalf of our constituents. And in coming to know his family, I can see where those qualities began. You could see that he was supported by his beloved mother, Kimberley Davis, in the way he supported our team—always ready to help out and pitch in for the mission. You could see that he was helped and mentored by his uncles and aunts in the way he helped and mentored the new members of our office whom he worked with.

Today, in the gallery, in addition to John's mother, Kimberley, we are joined by his uncle John and John's wife, Carol; and Christian Gibbs, who was like an uncle to John.

You could see how much John was loved by those closest to him by how much he loved and embraced others, and he, in turn, was loved and respected by our entire Capitol Hill family. He was an example to all of us of a person who put everyone else's challenges ahead of his own.

Our office wants to hold John Amara Walters up as a model to other young people who walk through our doors. As I mentioned, John began his service with us when he was an intern, and we have decided to establish a permanent paid internship position in John's name and memory, and that position will always go to a student from Maryland who is attending Howard University.

In that way, we know that the young leaders of the future will learn about John's spirit and his legacy and learn to carry forward his torch of empathy and positive change.

John wanted to help others. He wanted to leave the world better than he found it. He did that and much more. While his life was far too short in years, it was long in the joy and the love he shared and in the lives he changed for the better.

Thank you, John. We love you.  
I yield the floor.

#### EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the Robinson nomination, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Beth Robinson, of Vermont, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Second Circuit.

#### VOTE ON ROBINSON NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Robinson nomination?

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) is necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS), the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO), and the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS).

The result was announced—yeas 51, nays 45, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 449 Ex.]

#### YEAS—51

Baldwin	Hickenlooper	Peters
Bennet	Hirono	Reed
Blumenthal	Kaine	Rosen
Booker	Kelly	Sanders
Brown	King	Schatz
Cantwell	Klobuchar	Schumer
Cardin	Leahy	Shaheen
Carper	Lujan	Sinema
Casey	Manchin	Smith
Collins	Markey	Stabenow
Coons	Menendez	Tester
Cortez Masto	Merkley	Van Hollen
Duckworth	Murkowski	Warner
Durbin	Murphy	Warnock
Feinstein	Murray	Warren
Hassan	Ossoff	Whitehouse
Heinrich	Padilla	Wyden

#### NAYS—45

Barrasso	Fischer	Moran
Blackburn	Graham	Paul
Blunt	Grassley	Portman
Boozman	Hagerty	Risch
Braun	Hawley	Romney
Burr	Hoeven	Sasse
Capito	Hyde-Smith	Scott (FL)
Cassidy	Inhofe	Scott (SC)
Cornyn	Johnson	Shelby
Cotton	Kennedy	Sullivan
Cramer	Lankford	Thune
Crapo	Lee	Toomey
Cruz	Lummis	Tuberville
Daines	Marshall	Wicker
Ernst	McConnell	Young

#### NOT VOTING—4

Gillibrand	Rubio
Rounds	Tillis

The nomination was confirmed.

#### EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HEINRICH). Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the Heytens nomination, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Toby J. Heytens, of Virginia, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Fourth Circuit.

#### VOTE ON HEYTENS NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Heytens nomination?

Mr. BENNET. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) is necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS), the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO), and the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS).

The result was announced—yeas 53, nays 43, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 450 Ex.]

#### YEAS—53

Baldwin	Heinrich	Peters
Bennet	Hickenlooper	Reed
Blumenthal	Hirono	Rosen
Booker	Kaine	Sanders
Brown	Kelly	Schatz
Cantwell	King	Schumer
Cardin	Klobuchar	Shaheen
Carper	Leahy	Sinema
Casey	Lujan	Smith
Collins	Manchin	Stabenow
Coons	Markey	Tester
Cortez Masto	Menendez	Van Hollen
Duckworth	Merkley	Warner
Durbin	Murkowski	Warnock
Feinstein	Murphy	Warren
Graham	Murray	Whitehouse
Grassley	Ossoff	Wyden
Hassan	Padilla	

#### NAYS—43

Barrasso	Fischer	Portman
Blackburn	Hagerty	Risch
Blunt	Hawley	Romney
Boozman	Hoeben	Sasse
Braun	Hyde-Smith	Scott (FL)
Burr	Inhofe	Scott (SC)
Capito	Johnson	Shelby
Cassidy	Kennedy	Sullivan
Cornyn	Lankford	Thune
Cotton	Lee	Toomey
Cramer	Lummis	Tuberville
Crapo	Marshall	Wicker
Cruz	McConnell	Young
Daines	Moran	
Ernst	Paul	

#### NOT VOTING—4

Gillibrand	Rubio
Rounds	Tillis

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. SMITH). Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table, and the President will immediately be notified of the Senate's actions.

The majority leader.

#### JOHN LEWIS VOTING RIGHTS ADVANCEMENT ACT

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, in 1 minute, I will be filing cloture on the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Act, but I am going to give a short, brief remark before I do that.

Now, tonight, I am filing cloture on a motion to proceed on the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act. That means that the Senate is going to take a first vote on whether or not we even debate this voting rights bill—even debate it—on Wednesday.

Our democracy relies on the guarantee of free and fair elections. Across the country, we are witnessing a coordinated assault on the integrity of our electoral process. We must advance critical reforms to protect the freedom to vote, fulfilling the life and the legacy of our late colleague John Lewis.

If there is any issue that deserves debate in this Chamber, it is protecting voting rights. I know that both parties have differences on this important issue, but Republicans shouldn't be afraid to debate the bill.

If the Senate votes to open debate to this bill, I am prepared to offer an open and honest and full-fledged process here on the Senate floor, where Republican amendments will be made in order and allowed and debated.

If Republican Senators have different ideas on how to achieve a stronger democracy, they owe it to the American people to come forward and debate their ideas. Simply standing silent with their arms crossed, refusing to allow the Senate to function, is unacceptable.

#### LEGISLATIVE SESSION

#### JOHN R. LEWIS VOTING RIGHTS ADVANCEMENT ACT OF 2021—Motion to Proceed

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I move to proceed to Calendar No. 143, S. 4.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 143, S. 4, a bill to amend the Voting Rights Act of 1965 to revise the criteria for determining which States and political subdivisions are subject to section 4 of the Act, and for other purposes.

#### CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

#### CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 143, S. 4, a bill to amend the Voting Rights Act of 1965 to revise the criteria for determining which States and political subdivisions are subject to section 4 of the Act, and for other purposes.

Charles E. Schumer, Patrick J. Leahy, Sheldon Whitehouse, Thomas R. Carper, Richard J. Durbin, Catherine Cortez Masto, Margaret Wood Hassan, Raphael G. Warnock, Gary C. Peters, Patty Murray, Kirsten E. Gillibrand, Jacky Rosen, Elizabeth Warren, Benjamin L. Cardin, Tina Smith, Alex Padilla, Amy Klobuchar

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum call for the cloture motion filed today, November 1, be waived.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### TIGRAY

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, the situation in Tigray continues to deteriorate. Recent bombings by the Ethiopian Government of Tigray's densely populated capital city, Mekele, has reportedly killed civilians, including children. Millions of people have been displaced, and many in Tigray are facing famine. Combatants on both sides of the conflict have committed atrocities.

The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs reported recently that only 14 percent of trucks with relief aid were getting through to the people of Tigray, due to roadblocks and lack of fuel. Lifesaving medications have been blocked from getting into Tigray, which cripples the ability of the UN and their NGO partners to respond to urgent health needs. If the government does not permit deliveries of humanitarian aid, more and more people will needlessly starve to death.

The United States has imposed sanctions against the government in Addis Ababa. The Congress has also acted. The Fiscal Year 2022 Department of State and Foreign Operations Appropriations bill was introduced in the Senate on October 26, and it would prohibit U.S. military aid to Ethiopia. It would also require the Department of the Treasury to oppose international bank loans to the Ethiopian Government, except to meet basic human needs, until the government ceases offensive military operation, takes credible and sustained steps toward a genuine political dialogue to end the conflict, implements measures to protect human rights, allows unimpeded humanitarian access, and cooperates with independent investigations of violations of human rights.

Ethiopia is a country facing every imaginable problem, increasingly exacerbated by climate change. There is no military solution to the ethnic rivalries that have divided the country for generations. Any sustainable solution will only be achieved through negotiation and compromise. The international community, including the United States, can help support such a dialogue, but it is the Ethiopian Government's responsibility to create the conditions for that to occur. Rather than squander the country's scarce resources on a fruitless, brutal campaign to dominate Tigray by force, Prime Minister Abiy would be well advised to listen to the international community